Theological Seminary. June 16th 1845

Dear Brethren.

Your letter, written some time during the last year through Brother S. Miller. Jr. was not received until a few weeks since. It reached this place at the time of our long summer vacation, when most of the Students had gone away. In our absence it was taken out of the Office by some friend, and misplaced, all without the knowledge of our Society. This we hope you will accept as a satisfactory reason for not having answered it sooner. We know too well the value & importance of frequent interchanges of christian sentiments & feelings between Sister Institutions of the same land, to have done any thing to interrupt them. As members of the same church, as candidates for the same ministry, it is good for us occasionally to hold religious communion, that we may assist each other, in our endeavours to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of divine things. Though we are far removed from each other, and perhaps may never become acquainted in this life, yet as we have but one Lord, one faith, one baptism, we should feel united to each other, by the common bonds of the gospel of Christ.

We are glad to hear of the continued prosperity of your Seminary, especially of the deep interest felt during the last year, in the cause of Missions. We hope the three brethren who left you to enter into a foreign field may prove valuable reinforcements to those already labouring with the Heathen. Though we do have come far short of performing our duty in relation to this subject,

yet as a Society we feel and must acknowledge its vital importance. It can scarcely be too frequently and earnestly presented to the public mind. So far as human instrumentality goes, it seems at present to be the only method of converting the world: The success of those who have gone before us is sufficient encouragement for more vigilant effort: And we have cause for rejoicing that Providence continues to open new fields white to the harvest and ready for more laborers. As our Southern Country is comparatively very destitute, and our number usually small, most of the graduates of this Seminary remain at home. A few however have gone into foreign fields, and are now scattered in various parts of the world - Some two years since Brother R. L. Way left us for Siam - He has since settled in China, where we hope in conjunction with others, he may be useful in the conversion of many souls

Among the many topicks of the present day which are occupying the attention of the public mind, with us, there is none interesting than that of the religious instruction of the Negroes - It is a subject not altogether new with us, yet we must confess, that we have too long neglected the spiritual wants of this people - In former days no special effort was put forth in their behalf: But things are beginning to change. Masters have commenced to realize their own individual responsibilities: All denominations seem to be awakening to a sense

of their duty. The Revd C. C. Jones of our Church, whose name we presume is known to many of you, has been laboring in this field for many years, with much zeal & success. He has written much on the subject, which has in some degree aroused the Church from her state of apathy and indifference: Several invitations have been sent the Senior members of the class to go and labour among this people after the time of their graduation. So that from the present signs of the times, we are anticipating happy results from this interesting field of Missionary enterprise. And here in this connexion, we can not but express our most hearty concurrence in the decision of the late General Assembly in relation to the exciting subject of Slavery.

In compliance with your request, we have given the subject of parochial schools a partial consideration. For want of information we are unable to give any decided opinion as to the expediency of such a system in our country. It has certainly been productive of much good to the Church in Scotland. It is very evident we have too much neglected the moral education of the youth of our Church. Something of this kind is necessary to combat with the irreligious and skeptical influences of the age. After the Special Committee appointed by the General Assembly, shall have reported, the Church will be better prepared to act in relation to this subject.

We regret that we have nothing interesting to communicate respecting the spiritual condition of our Southern Churches. It is indeed a time of religious drought with us. It seems as if the age of revivals had passed away. We have seldom known the state of piety to be lower than at present. But we are

hoping for better times: Next Thursday being the day appointed for fasting humiliation and prayer, it should be a solemn week with us. We cannot but hope our prayers may be answered in the abundant outpourings of the Spirit upon our churches. Above all things we are wanting a more elevated standard of piety in the ministry. This has too long prevailed a spirit of controversy, to the neglect of more essential duties. And now in conclusion, Brethren, let us entreat you

Columbia &c.
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The Secretary of Inquiry
of the Theological Seminary
Princeton
N. J.

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to join with us in praying, that by divine grace they may be enabled to set an example worthy of the imitation of their flocks.

Yours, Dear Brethren, on behalf of the Society of Inquiry, in the bonds of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Samuel Winn.

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